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The Meaning of God's Annual Sabbaths!

Sermonette by Robert Schmid

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Happy Sabbath to everyone. Brethren, this is the 4th weekly Sabbath of the New Biblical Year, and of course, last week, we kept two of God's annual Sabbaths.

What a pleasure, and what a blessing it is to remember the Sabbath day, and to keep it holy. It's a privilege, and I am sure you all realize that keeping the Sabbath makes us part of a very small minority in the world. To be sure, there are thousands of Sabbath-keeping Churches in the United States and around the world. A rough estimate would be that there are probably less than 50 million Sabbath keepers around the world?

Think about it, that's not 10%, not 5%, that's less than 1% of the total world population of appr. 5.3 billion. Now that's what I call being part of a minority.

But even more so, let's consider the fact that last week we all remembered and kept two out of God's seven annual Sabbaths. Now you are really talking about a minority, because of all the weekly Sabbath keepers in the world, very few know about God's annual Sabbaths, therefore, very few remember, and understand, and keep God's annual Sabbaths holy.

Being part of such an incredible minority is simply a miracle. A gift from God. Separating us very distinctly from the world as a whole, but also from general Christianity, and even from other weekly Sabbath keepers.

Now that makes God's annual feasts very special, and I wonder if we give sufficient thought and consideration to these festivals?

Now, I know that most of us are well familiar with the fact that there are seven annual feast days, and what they mean. But if there is any doubt in any bodies mind, or if you could not explain to yourself what these annual Sabbaths mean, and how these days explain God's complete plan of salvation, then, please make it a priority in your Bible study, and familiarize yourself completely with God's feast days.

It's not my purpose today to explain them, even though I will touch on them all. My purpose today is to talk about the fact that there are seven festivals and that these seven are divided into three and four.

The fact that there are seven, tells us that we have and understand the complete plan of salvation. Seven is the number denoting divine, or spiritual perfection. I have here a book on "Numbers in Scripture". There are 15 pages of how the number 7 is used in scripture, but would you believe it,

the fact that there are 7 Holy Days, that there are 7 Festivals explaining the complete plan of salvation for all mankind, is not even mentioned in this book. The fact that there are 7 days of Unleavened Bread and 7 days in the Feast of Tabernacles is also not mentioned in this book. Unbelievable!

It simply has not been revealed to these learned people who wrote this book. As it says in Luke, "thou (God) hast hidden these things from the wise and from the intellectuals, and revealed them unto babes."

We are really blessed having this knowledge and understanding.

So, now let's look at the first three festivals. I mentioned to you that they are divided in to three and four.

The first three are -- Passover, Days of Unleavened Bread and Pentecost. Do you realize that they literally have already happened, and when we celebrate them, we look back on them. Now that's in contrast to the next four: Trumpets, Atonement, Feast of Tabernacles and Last Great Day. They are yet to happen. Their fulfillment is yet future. We look forward to their fulfillment when we celebrate them.

But there is more. Do you realize that the first three festivals Passover, Days of Unleavened Bread and Pentecost are given to change us personally. Look at the Passover, even though Christ died for all mankind, it's of no value to anyone unless you and I personally accept His blood sacrifice.

Days of Unleavened Bread requires us, in a very personal way, to search ourselves and look for, and repent of our (hidden) sins. Not the sins of someone else!

And Pentecost was of course a very special event, when God gave His Holy Spirit to a very select group of people whom He was calling into the Family of God.

Yes, the 1st three festivals are designed to change very specific people in a very personal way.

Now, lets look at the last four festivals. They are designed to change the world. Look at them beginning with Trumpets. A worldwide event when the Trumpet will sound and the dead will be raised. The whole world will be greatly affected when Jesus Christ returns as King of kings and Lord of lords as we read in Rev. 11.

Next, consider the Day of Atonement. Can you imagine the worldwide impact when Satan will be removed, no longer allowed to deceive people and to cause them to sin (Rev. 20).

A couple of Sabbaths ago, when I prayed and meditated about this early in the morning, I couldn't help but to really look forward to the Day of Atonement. It was a wonderful morning. It was quiet and peaceful. The sun was just coming up and the birds were singing, and I was at peace with myself, with the world, and with God.

Everything seemed so perfect, but no sooner did I have these thoughts, that Satan reminded me that I lived in his world and that I had to go to the funeral of a longtime friend this very morning. And so my thoughts turned to the grieving widow, to the sorrow and grief that death, sickness and sin have brought to all of us.

Then, my thoughts turned again to the Day of Atonement, and the realization that Satan's days are numbered, and that soon peace and well-being will be possible for all.

So, the Day of Atonement will have an incredible impact on this world.

Next we celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles. It causes us to look forward to the Kingdom of God, and the fulfillment of our prayer, "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." Is that going to change the world? You bet it will! Rev. 20

Next there will be what is known as the Last Great Day.

This 7th festival will culminate God's plan of salvation. It will bring to a conclusion, and tie together all the loose ends. Every injustice will be corrected and billions, yes billions of people who never had an opportunity to even so much as hear the name of Christ, will get their first opportunity to know and to accept God and their Savior Jesus Christ.

Will that be an event with impact on the whole world? You bet it will!

Can you see and feel how important, how meaningful God's Sabbaths and Holy Days are? Knowing what we know, and understanding what we understand, can we ever again take God's feasts for granted, or be casual and careless about them?

There is a warning in scripture against rejecting God's revelation. It is found in Heb. 2 beginning in verse 1. Here Paul gives us a warning against rejecting God's revelation when he says: "Therefore" [that is, because God has revealed to us the message of Christ and He has revealed to us His complete plan of salvation, both for you and me personally, and for the world as a whole], "Therefore, [or because of this], we must pay the closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it." Verse 2 "For if the message declared by angels was valid and every transgression or disobedience received a just retribution [a just penalty], how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation?"

In summary, we can see that out of the seven festivals God has given to us, three have already happened, and they are right now changing individual lives.

Four are yet to happen, and when they do, they will change the world, in fact they will change this whole universe and everything that is in it.

And all you and I have to do is: "Remember the Sabbath days and keep them holy."

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